damages caused to roads by telecom operators and multi-media player while laying down the optical fibre network;

(b) if so, whether the Attorney General has given his opinion; and

(c) to what extent, both the Ministers have agreed to implement the above proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B. C. KHANDURI): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The question of interpretation on the policy had arisen in a case, hence the opinion of Attorney General has been sought, which is awaited.

Ban on plying fifteen years old vehicles in Delhi

212. SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in order to curb vehicular pollution in the Capital (Delhi), Government have decided to ban plying of private vehicles which are more than 15 years old, irrespective of the pollution control devices and measures adopted by such buses; and

(b) if so, the reasons for such a drastic measures impinging on the Fundamental Rights of citizens; and whether in order to control vehicular pollution any other effective steps are being adopted, if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B. C. KHANDURI): (a) No, Sir. The plying of 15 years old commercial/transport vehicles only has been banned in compliance with the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. Plying of old commercial/transport vehicles of 15 years age and above has been banned *w.e.f.* 1st January, 1999.

(b) In the light of the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, a number of measures such as introduction of Metro Rail, provision of clean fuel, provision of financial

incentives, phasing out of old commercial vehicles etc. have been taken.

Closure of SSI units

213. PROF. M. M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the major factors responsible for closure of small and medium scale industrial units in different parts of the country;

(b) the number of labourers rendered jobless in these closed units, category-wise; and

(c) the steps Government have taken to provide employment to these experienced workers and technicians?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) The major factors responsible for sickness/closure of small and medium scale industrial units are inadequacy of credit, technological obsolescence, marketing problems, managerial inadequacies etc. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) maintains data on sick SSI units and not for closed units. The data on number of labourers rendered jobless as a result of closure of industrial units is not maintained by the RBI.

(c) Government has been providing assistance under Counselling and Retraining Scheme for counselling, retraining and redeployment of workers rationalised from organised sector. As on 31.01.2001, 71,604 rationalised workers have been counselled, 53,574 retrained and 18,219 redeployed.